

The Condition of Teacher Quality in Arizona: 2005

Executive Summary

Over the past 14 months, the Arizona State Board of Education's discussions and actions have had an impact in five key areas: structured English immersion (SEI), early childhood teacher certification, program review, tiered certification, and performance assessment. As SEI implementation began, the State Board instituted requirements for all educators without an English as a Second Language (ESL) Endorsement or a Bilingual Education Endorsement to have a full SEI Endorsement by 2009, adding to teachers' training and professional development needs. New certification requirements for pre-school teachers and child care workers are likely to impose new costs and could lead to losses of long-term, uncertified staff. The implementation of a standards-based teacher-quality evaluation program is likely to be felt around the state as teacher-training institutions re-examine their programs. A program of tiered certification is moving ahead, offering educators an opportunity to aspire to Master Teacher certification. A teaching standards portfolio and rubric to assess teacher performance is in the final stages of development. The definitions of quality, competency, and professionalism in education are being discussed, debated.

Recommendations

It is recommended that:

- The Arizona State Board of Education amend its rules to institute an attendance policy to ensure that major stakeholders are represented and part of policy decision making.
- The Arizona Department of Education (ADE) establish a database of information listing K-12 classroom teachers' program preparation, date of certification, and years of teaching experience as well as any transfer experience and certification from other states.
- ADE continue and expand its already considerable effort to include major stakeholders in committee and subcommittee work that eventually appears before the State Board, so that all committees engage a broad base of representation across the state.